



Governor Terry E. Branstad
Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds
San Wong, Director

DHR Board
Tuesday, February 18, 2014
10 a.m.
Lucas State Office Building, Room 201, 321 E. 12th St., Des Moines, IA

Members Present: Jill Olsen, Jason Glass, Floyd Winter, Sherri Soich*, Ben Jung, Anna Brown, Theresa Legg, San Wong (ex-officio) (*indicates member joined by phone)

Members Absent: LaSheila Yates, Joan Jaimes, Karen Mackey, Redmond Jones, Rep. Thede (ex-officio), Sen. Rita Hart (ex-officio)

Guests: Ann Hughes, Office of the Governor; Michael Ferjak, Human Trafficking Squad in Office of the Attorney General; Michelle Durand-Adams, Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women; Stephanie Lyons, DHR Office of Deaf Services; Heidi Smith, Deputy Director; Mary Bowser, budget analyst; Paul Stageberg, CJPJ Administrator; Bill Brand, DCAA Administrator; Danielle Plogmann, staff; Jenni Klise, staff

Call to order: Chair Olsen called the meeting to order at 10 a.m.

Motion: Winter moved to approve the October 18, 2013 meeting minutes.

Second: Jung seconded.

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Director Wong introduced Michael Ferjak from the Office of the Attorney General for a presentation on human trafficking in Iowa. Mr. Ferjak was invited, as human trafficking victims are from many of Iowa's underserved populations.

Ferjak presented information regarding human trafficking, some cases in Iowa, and explained some of the challenges in fighting human trafficking. Ferjak urged individuals to contact law enforcement if they notice abnormal activity that could be human trafficking. There is also a national Trafficking Hotline: 1-888-373-7888. Ferjak is looking for ways to get into underrepresented communities to raise awareness about human trafficking and any guidance from the board would be appreciated. He also asked board members to talk to their commissions about how their constituents might be intersecting with the trafficking business, either through sex, labor or both.

Ferjak is working with community colleges to develop continuing education courses aimed at local law enforcement for training on human trafficking.

Director Wong presented the department's report, thanking board members for attending the annual Open House immediately preceding the board meeting. Governor Branstad and Lt. Governor Reynolds were in attendance and discussed some valuable partnerships with DHR. In her report, Wong explained that the Governor's budget includes a status quo recommendation for DHR, with the exception of some increase to cover salary increases. The executive team has been busy tracking legislation tied to DHR's work including several bills initiated outside of DHR related to juveniles and the justice system as well as LIHEAP. Rep. Gaines and Rep. Samad have sponsored a bill that would rename DHR's Office and Commission on the Status of African Americans to specifically include Africans. Wong explained staff had previously met with the Somali community, which wanted to form its own commission. Somalis then met with representatives, leading to the introduction of the current bill. In response to a question from Winter, Wong noted that DHR has not received new appointments for two vacant legislative ex-officio memberships yet. Also, board member Jennifer Upah resigned as representative from the Deaf Services Commission. Theresa Legg was attending the meeting as the new voting member for that commission.

Division of Community Action Agencies Administrator Bill Brand provided an update on LIHEAP. General assistance enrollment is on the same pace as last year, though emergency assistance requests are up. Emergency assistance covers things like propane delivery and furnace repairs and replacements. Brand noted there could be an uptick in assistance requests when people get their January heating bills. He noted that heating costs are about 25% higher than a year ago, so the purchasing power of the LIHEAP benefit is reduced. Brand expects a wave of assistance requests when the moratorium on shutoffs ends April 1. When asked about legislation, Brand said there are two bills initiated outside DHR by the legislature which would supplement federal LIHEAP dollars with state money. The House version would appropriate \$1 million and the Senate version would appropriate \$2 million. Brand said that he and staff are committed to doing the best with what resources they currently have. Wong added that she and Bill are meeting the next day with the Iowa Utilities Board in advance of anticipated needs when the moratorium ends. They have also been working closely with the Governor's Office, Iowa Department of Agriculture, Iowa Department of Transportation and Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management during the propane crisis.

Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Administrator Paul Stageberg had previously been asked to provide an update related to the Iowa Juvenile Home. Since the last meeting, the juvenile home has closed. Stageberg stated he didn't have anything to report outside of what's been reported publicly.

Work Group Updates:

Advocacy – Chair Olsen reported that since the last meeting, she and Jason Glass worked on putting together top priorities for the board to focus on. Those priorities are:

1. Increased funding and personnel to empower DHR website development to increase our efficacy in advocating and serving our constituencies.
2. Economic independence of underrepresented populations in Iowa through:
 - a. Financial literacy
 - b. Micro credit opportunities
 - c. Child care
3. Alleviation of disproportionate incarceration of African Americans, Latinos and Native Americans in Iowa.

Danielle Plogmann, staff, provided an update regarding the website. During a meeting last week, a leader from the Department of Administrative Services indicated the state might explore working with the contracted web development company to build templates agencies could use for transitioning to a new, more user-friendly website. There is no timeframe on this and is just in the discussion stages. This idea came up as one possible way to speed up the transition process across state government.

Motion: Jill Olsen moved that the Board accept the proposed priorities as priorities for this year.

Second: Glass seconded.

Discussion: Glass said he sees the priorities as a starting place to build upon in future years. The first one regarding web resources is internal to the Department. The other two should have broad support and the priorities cut across our diverse commissions.

Vote: Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Communication work group – Soich said the work group had nothing new to report and would get together before the next meeting to move on to the next item in the action plan.

Data work group – Jung said the work group needs to schedule a conference call to move forward. Wong suggested this might be a good point to bring together the data and advocacy work groups to find ways to move forward on priorities. Previously the work group identified existing relationships that might be useful.

Commission Updates:

Public member (Winter) – Nothing to add to earlier discussion.

Commission on the Status of Women (Olsen) - Capitol Girls recently took place with 15 girls shadowing legislators. Judging takes place next week for the Write Women Back into History essay contest, which has more than 90 entries. Gender balance remains a focus. The commission is beginning to look at treatment and mistreatment of women in the military. The commission is happy to see the legislature discussing shackling of pregnant women. The commission is also focusing on women-owned businesses and microcredit opportunities.

Deaf Services Commission – This was Legg’s first meeting at the board. She will provide an update next time.

Commission on Community Action Agencies (Brown) – Nothing to add to Bill Brand’s report.

Public Member (Glass) – Nothing to add to earlier discussion.

Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (Jung) – API met last week. The commission is working more smoothly after some time together and has benefited from strategic planning. While there is a large celebration event in May, the commission is trying to be mindful that some of its population needs assistance.

Public comment: Stephanie Lyons, DHR staff in the Office of Deaf Services, asked the board to be mindful of accommodations for communication. For example, when someone is being arrested, there can be a barrier if that individual is deaf or hard of hearing. She also said some prisons and detention centers need improved communication equipment for deaf and hard of hearing inmates. She expressed similar concerns about other public facilities. Glass thanked Ms. Lyons for bringing that up, and said they could build upon communication concerns within the priorities identified earlier. There was also discussion about individuals talking with legislators over the summer months.

Winter moved to adjourn. Jung seconded.

Olsen adjourned the meeting at 12:07 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Danielle Plogmann, staff.